

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06  
IO-13 SSM-03 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 ACDA-12  
( ISO ) W

-----055632 310937Z /23

P R 301646Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2303  
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
USMISSION USUN  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L 4333

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PBOR, IS, LE  
SUBJECT: WEIZMAN DISCUSSES SOUTH LEBANON

1. DURING A FREQUENTLY INTERRUPTED CONVERSATION LAST EVENING  
(MARCH 29) AT THE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE, DEFENSE MINISTER  
WEIZMAN SHARED THE FOLLOWING THOUGHTS WITH DCM AND ARMA:  
--THE UN SHOULD COMPLETE ITS MOVEMENT OF UNIFIL UNITS  
INTO SOUTH LEBANON AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE SO THAT IDF FORCES  
CAN BE MOVED. THE IDF WANTS OUT.  
--HE IS VERY PROUD OF THE RESTRAINT EXHIBITED BY THE IDF  
WHICH RESULTED IN MINIMAL CIVILIAN AND IDF CASUALTIES.  
--IF THE SOUTH LEBANON OPERATION WERE TO BE RE-RUN,  
THE ONLY TWO OPERATIONS WHICH HE PROBABLY WOULD NOT REPEAT  
WOULD BE THE AIR STRIKES NEAR BEIRUT AND THE COMMANDO  
RAID AT AD LUN.  
--THE COST OF THE OPERATION WAS NOT VERY HIGH: "IT  
IS SOMETHING WE CAN TAKE OUT OF TRAINING." WHEN  
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CHALLENGED THAT THE COST WOULD THUS COME OUT OF THE HIDES  
OF THOSE WHO HAD NOT PARTICIPATED AND WHO NEEDED THE  
TRAINING, HE MINIMIZED THE EFFECT UPON OVERALL READINESS.  
--THE IDF DID NOT ATTACK TYRE OR BLOCK THE PALESTINAIN  
RETREAT BY TAKING BRIDGES BECAUSE "YOU (USG) WOULD NEVER  
HAVE GONE ALONG WITH IT IF WE HAD TOLD YOU IN ADVANCE."

2. COMMENT: DESPITE WEIZMAN'S APPRAISAL THAT THE OPERATION HAD "GONE WELL", IT CONTINUES TO BE A TOPIC OF CRITICISM IN THE PRESS AND IN THE KNESSET. CRITICS ALLEGE THAT THE INVASION DID NOT HALT THE SHELLING OF NORTHERN ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS NOR DID IT KILL OR CAPTURE MANY PALESTINIAN FIGHTERS. MOREOVER, THE MAJOR PALESTINIAN BASE IN TYRE REMAINS INTACT AND APPEARS TO BE RECEIVING REINFORCEMENTS. AT THE SAME TIME WE ARE HEARING COMPLAINTS PRIVATELY FROM IDF SOURCES THAT ISRAELI FORCES ENDED UP FIGHTING THE TERRAIN, WEATHER AND MINES, RATHER THAN KILLING TERRORISTS. ALTHOUGH THEIR REASONS DIFFER, THE IDF AND WEIZMAN APPEAR TO SHARE ONE DESIRE IN COMMON: TO GET OUT OF LEBANON AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE AND PUT THE OPERATION BEHIND THEM. MANY FEEL THIS EPOSODE WAS NOT THE IDF'S FINEST HOUR.

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## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Subject:** WEIZMAN DISCUSSES SOUTH LEBANON  
**TAGS:** PBOR, IS, LE, UNSC, UNIFIL, (WEIZMAN, EZER)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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